

Application of Yin (2009) models in Persian translation of English book titles

Abolfazl Sanjarani: Ph.D. in Translation Studies, Department of English Translation Studies, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

Khatereh Arefi: BA student in English translation, sistan and Baluchistan University, Zahedan, Iran

Abstract

Translation studies is an academic discipline that examines translation, interpreting, and localization from a variety of perspectives. The researcher noted that there has been limited work into title translation. Consequently, the objective of this study is further examination of the topic. This is a descriptive and corpus based research. The compilation of books published by the Franklin Book Program from 1953 to 1977 has been obtained from the National Library of Iran website. Then it has been transferred into a corpus. This list contains information such as title of the books, translator's name, book publisher and the English title of the book. This study only focuses on the title translation of books in the art and history genres. Therefore, based on the genres the books have been selected and placed into tables. This study uses Yin (2009) theoretical framework for analyzing the data. At last step the number and frequency of each theory used in title translation of the mentioned books have been calculated based on the Yin (2009) theory of title translation. Then they have been classified and inserted into different tables and chart. The result in this study shows that different strategies could be more utilized for translating book titles in different genres.

Keywords: Translation studies, translation history, title translation, book titles

1. Introduction

Translation studies is an academic discipline that examines translation, interpreting, and localization from a variety of perspectives. Theoretically, it explores the history and philosophy of translation, as well as current trends in the field. It also examines the practical experiences of translators, including the context and practices of translating specialist texts. As an interdisciplinary, translation studies borrows much from the various fields of study that support translation. These include comparative literature, computer science, history, linguistics, philology, philosophy, semiotics, and terminology.

Holmes (1924-1986) stated that translation studies is a course on the main paradigms of Western translation theories since the 1960s. It adopts a view of translation that includes interpreting (spoken translation) but does not give any special attention to the problems of interpreting. Holmes' foundational lecture 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies' (1972) set out to orient the scholarly study of translation. It put forward a conceptual scheme that identified and interrelated many of the things that can be done in translation studies, envisaging an entire future discipline and effectively stimulating work aimed at establishing that discipline.

History has always been an important part of translation studies, but it was not until the turn of the twenty-first century that translation history started to become its own field, with its own methods, metadiscoursal, and body of research. Rundle calls this the "emergence of the historiography of translation and interpreting" (Rundle, 2022, p. xviii).

2. Review of literature

According to Moravej Mehr et al (2014), genres significantly influence the production and translation of book titles, with general differences and culture-specific differences. In experimental genres, translated books are often published under two titles: translation on the front cover and original on the back cover page. Literal translation is the most commonly used procedure, while borrowing technical terms in experimental titles adds a scientific and technical sense. Other procedures, such as modification, translation, and adaptation, are also common.

Palade (2021) suggests that book titles are a marketing tool that appeals to readers and serves as a textual microcosm. Translating book titles can be challenging, as the shift from definite article to indefinite article form, general to particular, or verb to noun can be either a loss or a source of inspiration. Literary translation aims to accurately represent and echo literature as art.

Salami, Mozaheb, et al (2024) assert translators tend to change language semantics in children's books, while in adult books they prefer word-for-word translations. This suggests that translating book titles for different age groups requires different approaches, including wise title choices.

According to Salehi and Falahati Qadimi Fumani (2013), each naming approach has a primary function, such as transliteration for economy and accuracy. In cases where transliteration is not possible, translators may choose literary translation, explication, adaptation, or a new title. The Skopos, or purpose of the translated text, remains up to the translator.

Yin (2009, p. 171) categorizes English title translation approaches into two primary types: those that preserve the original title (transliteration, literal translation, and explication) and those that replace it (adaptation, offering a new title). Nida (2001, p. 214) emphasized that regardless of the technique utilized, a crucial concept to remember is that the translation must be connected to the narrative in some manner.

- **Transliteration**

Borrowing the sound of the SL can be used in titles for place or human names that are recognizable to the target audience or have historical or cultural significance. Transliteration allows for the preservation of sound effects, such as SL rhythm, which will entertain the listener with a strong unique flavor.

- **Literal translation**

Literal translation can maintain the original's structure and substance as much as possible by translating the SL grammatical formulations to their closest TL equivalents. Sometimes a direct translation can be used when a movie's title accurately conveys the plot without coming across as strange or weird. The simplest and most efficient method for translating movie titles is literal translation, since the majority of English movie titles contain noun phrases or nouns.

- **Explication**

Titles, particularly allusive ones, whose literal translation inadequately conveys the narrative and hence fails to enlighten and engage the audience, additional details, must be incorporated to enhance clarity. Rather of being selected arbitrarily, these features should be derived from the narrative and serve to enhance the titles.

- **Adaptation**

Adaptation entails modifying cultural references. The translator must first understand the cultural nuances of movie titles and then seek appropriate target language equivalents that are easily comprehensible, accepted, and appreciated by the target language audience.

- **Providing a new title**

Undoubtedly, there are titles to which the aforementioned four strategies are inapplicable. Consequently, the translator may need to create a new title depend on their intuition and discernment to select the most suitable translation from numerous possibilities. The amended title must clearly and completely represent the narrative.

Upon reviewing the research on title translation, the researcher observed that minimal investigation has been undertaken in this domain. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to-further investigate the subject matter.

3. Methodology

This is a descriptive and corpus based research. The compilation of books published by the Franklin Book Program from 1953 to 1977 has been obtained from the National Library of Iran website. Then it has been transferred into a corpus. This list contains information such as title of the books, translator's name, book publisher and the English title of the book. This study only focuses on the title translation of books in the art and history genres. Therefore, based on the genres the books have been selected and placed into tables. This study uses Yin (2009) theoretical framework for analyzing the data. At last step the number and frequency of each theory used in title translation of the mentioned books have been calculated based on the Yin (2009) theory of title translation. Then they have been classified and inserted into different tables and chart.

4. Results and discussion

Table 1: Number of strategies used for translating titles of art books

Strategies	Transliteration	Literal Translation	Explication	Adaption	Providing a new title
Numbers	1	3	0	5	4

According to table 1, the most common used strategy among translators for translating titles of art books is adaption with 5 out of 13. The least favorite strategy according to the table above is explication

with no utilization recorded among translators. There are also other strategies such as providing a new title, literal translation and transliteration each respectively with 4, 3 and 1 use out of 13. One example for adaption use could be ENGINEERS DID IT (شاهکارهای مهندسی). An example for providing a new title is PARADOX SUR LE COMEDIEN (هنرپیشه کیست). Another example for literal translation application could be LUST FOR LIFE (شورزندگی), there was only one example for transliteration usage, and it is LEONARDO DA VINCI (لیوناردو داوینچی).

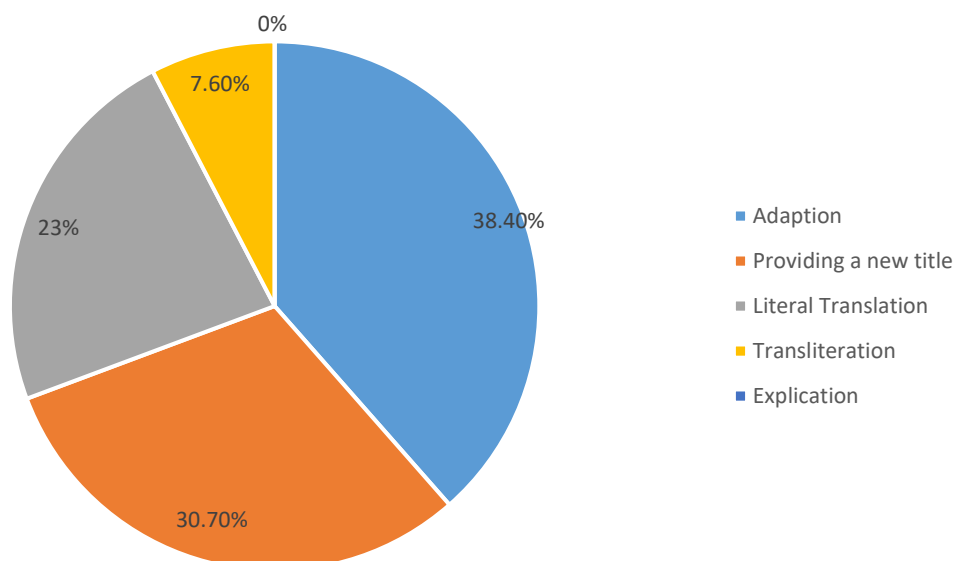


Chart 1: Frequency of strategies used in translating titles of art books

The results of chart 1 showed that adaptation and providing a new title each with 38.4% and 30.7% are the most favorite strategies among translators for translating the title of art books. Literal translation with 23% is next mostly used strategy. Transliteration and Explication each with 7.6% and 0% are the least common strategies that translators have used.

Table 2: Number of strategies used for translating titles of history books

Strategies	Transliteration	Literal Translation	Explication	Adaption	Providing a new title
Numbers	34	82	21	25	12

Table 2 indicates that the most common strategy used for translating the title of history books is literal translation with 82 numbers of use out of 175. The next two common strategy among translators for translating the title of history books are transliteration and adaption with 34 and 25 times use. The least common strategies in the mentioned field are explication and providing a new title each with 21 and 12 number of usage. In translating MEMOIRS OF A MINISTE (خاطرات نخست وزیر) the translator adapted literal translation. One example of transliteration is BUKHARA (بخارا) and an example for adaption could be THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH (جویندگان طلا). One example for explication and providing

a new title could be SAN'ATE NAFT IRAN (تاریخ ملی شدن صنعت نفت ایران) and LIVES OF DESTINY (بزرگ مردان تاریخ).

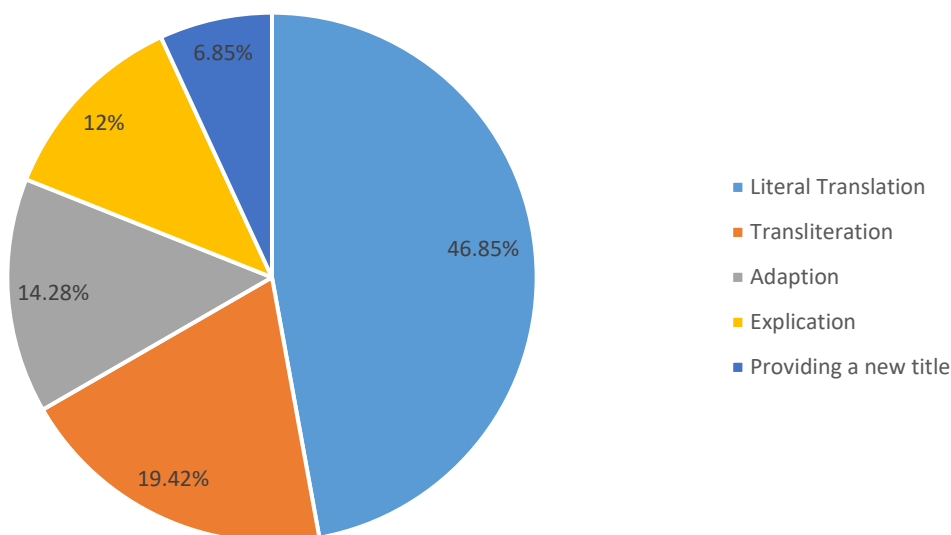


Chart 2: Frequency of strategies used in translating titles of history books

In accordance with the chart above, literal translation with 46.85% is the most frequent strategy for translating the title of history books. As the chart above shows, the next two frequent strategies are transliteration and adaption each with 19.42% and 14.28%. The least percentage of frequency belongs to explication and providing a new title each with 12% and 6.85%.

5. Conclusion

Reviewing other studies shows that this study could be somehow similar to Salami, Mozaheb, et al (2024) as it focuses on title translation. However, the same mentioned article analyzed titles according to Newmark's communicative translation and semantic translation and Vinay and Darbelnet's model. Therefore, the results are different based on the different framework utilized. The purpose of this study is describing the frequency of theories used by translators with no judgement. Other studies could compare the different strategies that each translator used. They could also investigate the frequency of each theory used by different translator with different nationality, the result could show if nationality influences the choices of translators.

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